Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 CCO-00 /026 W

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R 181150Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2998

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

CONFIDENTIAL DAMASCUS 1033

EXDIS

BEIRUT PASS BAGHDAD

E.O. 11652: GDS TAGS: PFOR, SY, PLO

SUBJECT: SYRO-PALESTINIAN JOINT COMMANDS

REF: BEIRUT 3351

1. CAN ADD NOTHING TO BEIRUT'S CONCISE ANALYSIS OF PLO ATTITUDES TOWARDS ASAD'S OFFER OF JOINT POLITICAL AND MILITARY COMMANDS. FOR THEIR PART OFFICIAL SYRIANS SEEM GENERALLY CONVINCED THAT PLO WILL ACCEPT OFFER IN NEAR FUTURE. DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER HAYDAR TOLD ME MARCH 16 HE EXPECTS DETAILED PLO-SARG NEGOTIATIONS TO BE COMPLETED WITHIN TWO WEEKS AND TO LEAD TO EARLY SETTING UP OF COMMANDS. HAYDAR STRESSED ASAD'S CONSTRUCTIVE INTENT IN MAKING OFFER, OBSERVING THAT JOINT COMMANDS WOULD HELP UNIFY PLO AND KEEP IT ON COURSE OF MODERATION.

2. AS COULD BE EXPECTED THERE ARE LESS CHARITABLE VIEWS CONFIDENTIAL

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OF ASAD'S OFFER. FOR EXAMPLE, SENIOR FONMIN OFFICIAL

COMMENTED TO ME HE BELIEVED THAT PROPOSAL OF JOINT COMMANDS
WAS JUST A BARGAINING COUNTER FOR ASAD VIZ-A-VIZ WASHINGTON
AND CAIRO WHICH WOULD BE QUIETLY DISCARDED SHOULD THERE
BE EARLY START ON SYRIAN-ISRAELI REGOTIATIONS FOR A FURTHER
STEP ON GOLAN.
MIDDHY

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NNN

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